

Message Text

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65

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /060 W

----- 017118

O R 161610Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3262

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 6711

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: DEFECTION OF MIG-25 PILOT

REF: STATE 228221

1. AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV TOOK AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY AT THE LUNCH GIVEN BY HIM SEPTEMBER 16 TO RAISE SUBJECT OF THE MIG-25. IN A LOW KEY, BUT FIRMLY, ABRASIMOV SAID THE SOVIET EMBASSY HAD GIVEN THE MATTER MUCH THOUGHT. THEY WERE STRUCK, ABRASIMOV SAID, BY PRESIDENT FORD'S "INVITATION" OFFERING ASYLUM TO THE PLANE'S PILOT THE VERY NEXT DAY FOLLOWING HIS ARRIVAL AND BY THE FACT THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES WERE DENIED ACCESS TO THE PILOT FOR FOUR DAYS, APPARENTLY AT THE INSTANCE OF US OFFICIALS. ABRASIMOV SAID THE US ADMINISTRATION'S STANCE TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION HAD HARDENED IN RECENT MONTHS, AND THE SOVIET UNION HAD TO VIEW THIS LATEST EVENT AS AN "UNFRIENDLY ACT" ON THE PART OF THE U.S.

2. ABRASIMOV CONTINUED THAT LOCAL AUTHORITIES WERE APPARENTLY UNABLE TO TRANSPORT THE PLANE, AND THE US HAD EAGERLY OFFERED THE SERVICES OF A LARGE TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT TO MOVE THE SOVIET PLANE.

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3. ACCORDING TO INSTRUCTIONS, AND AS I DID NOT KNOW
ALL THE FACTS, I DID NOT REPLY TO ABRASIMOV'S PRESENTATION,
EXCEPT TO SAY THAT I HAD SEEN PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS OF THE
EVENT, AND WAS AWARE THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD ISSUED
A PRESS STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT. HE DID NOT PUSH HARD
ON THE SUBJECT. REPORT ON OTHER SUBJECTS COVERED
IN MY CONVERSATION FOLLOW SEPTTEL. COOPER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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